

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

DATE: Monday, February 27, 2006
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
PRESENT: Selectmen Adams, Herl, Cloutier, Gagnon, and Gaucher; Town Administrator Terenzini; Administrative Assistant Simpson.

At 7:04 p.m. Chairman Adams called the meeting to order. Motion by Mr. Gagnon to approve the minutes of meeting of Monday, February 13, 2006; seconded by Mr. Herl. Motion passed, 5-0.

CITIZENS' INPUT: Paul McNeil of 93 Chestnut Street asked about painting of crosswalks. Mr. Gagnon noted this was the second such complaint received, and perhaps a sign would help. Chairman Adams said the Board would refer the item to the highway superintendent and look at it again in April.

COMMUNICATIONS: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Introduction of New Staff and Appointees: Laurie Viapiano introduced Mary Fisher, who will provide office support to various departments under the Catholic Charities Senior Employment Program. Fire Chief Parsons introduced Jen Lamothe, Timothy Lemieux, Joseph Nanigan, Robert Marsh, and James Turgeon as the five new firefighter recruits.

b. Action Re: Pole Hearing (Greenville Street): Tree Warden Ed Budnik and Lawrence Schuyler of National Grid were present. Mr. Schuyler said a dead tree was to be replaced by a pole with an anchor, and that the nearby dead tree would be looked at for removal as well. Mr. Budnik gave his approval. Motion by Mr. Herl to approve the pole request; seconded by Mr. Cloutier. Motion passed, 5-0.

c. Presentation Re: Carbon Monoxide Detector Law (SFD): Chief Parsons gave a presentation on "Nicole's Law," which goes into effect on March 31, 2006, and requires carbon monoxide detectors in certain buildings. There was discussion about inspections and fees, and clarification that the combination smoke detector/carbon monoxide detectors would not meet code.

d. Presentation Re: Continuity of Operations Plan (BoH): Health Inspector Lee Jarvis gave a presentation on the Continuity of Operations Plan, which will allow the office to function during an emergency. Mr. Jarvis answered questions about the Emergency Dispensing Site, which is the only item on the list of deliverables not yet finished. He said they would be seeking about 250 volunteers to help with the site. Clarification was given that while the town was provided with equipment and technical support instead of federal dollars, the regulations were a presidential directive and noncompliance would mean ineligibility for grants. Mr. Jarvis noted he would report back to the Board after a tabletop program scheduled for June.

e. Action Re: Declaring March 19-25, 2006, as "Peace Symposium Week": Paul McNeil of 93 Chestnut Street spoke of the events planned for the Peace Symposium. Motion by Mr. Herl to approve declaring March 19-25, 2006, as "Peace Symposium Week"; seconded by Mr. Cloutier. Motion passed, 5-0.

f. Action Re: One-Day Alcohol License for Mary, Queen of the Rosary: Chairman Adams noted this request was for Mary, Queen of the Rosary's March 18 St. Patrick's Dinner Dance. Motion by Mr. Herl to approve special license; seconded by Mr. Cloutier. Motion passed, 5-0.

g. Action Re: Set Date(s) for Perambulation of Bounds: Chairman Adams explained that the General Laws require that the town bounds be located and marked every five years and they had last been done in 1990. He said they hoped to hold the perambulation on April 22 and 29 for about two hours each day, with May 5 as a snow date, noting they hoped also to unveil the scenic road signs on April 29. Motion by Mr. Herl to approve 4/22, 4/29, and 5/5; seconded by Mr. Gagnon. Motion passed, 5-0. Motion by Mr. Cloutier that the chair and vice-chair be the two participants; seconded by Mr. Gagnon. No vote was taken.

h. Action Re: Appointment of Citizens to Lake Street & Maple Street Principal Screening Committees: Mr. Cloutier nominated Mr. Herl to serve on at least one of the committees; seconded by Mr. Gagnon. Mr. Herl said he would do both. Chairman Adams noted a letter of interest had been received from Sharon Wood for the Lake Street committee. Ms. Gaucher nominated Sharon Wood; seconded by Mr. Gagnon. Chairman Adams said Ms. Wood did not have his support because of the "cookie cutter appointees" phrase in her letter, which he felt was offensive. Mr. Herl said he felt that comment was negative, unprofessional, and inappropriate. Ms. Gaucher said she felt it was a conflict of interest for Mr. Herl to serve. Mr. Herl was appointed by voice vote: the vote for Ms. Woods was 2-3 (Ms. Gaucher and Mr. Gagnon voted aye) and the vote for Mr. Herl was 4-1 (Mr. Adams, Mr. Cloutier, Mr. Gagnon, and Mr. Herl voted aye).

i. Action Re: Framework to Honor Those Who Served: The Board discussed options for a policy regarding lowering the flag, considering lowering the flag only when ordered by the president or governor versus also lowering it (or draping the marquee in bunting) for certain requests (such as for town employees, appointees, elected officials, or soldiers), with the possibility of allowing the Chairman to order an exception during extraordinary circumstances. Chairman Adams said it would be difficult for a chair to deem a circumstance as not extraordinary. Mr. Cloutier felt the Board might paint itself into a corner and needed to leave some flexibility. Motion by Mr. Herl to accept section 3B (to drape marquee in bunting upon request for town employees, appointees, or elected officials in "good standing"); there was no second. There was discussion about lowering the flag for soldiers killed in the line of duty. Motion by Mr. Cloutier to table to next meeting; seconded by Mr. Herl. Motion passed, 4-1 (Ms. Gaucher voted no). Mr. Gagnon said he would try to speak with a few veterans.

j. Action Re: Delegation of CEO Status to Electronically File CDBG Application: Mr. Terenzini explained that permission on paper was needed before the CDBG application could be filed electronically. Motion by Mr. Herl to agree to delegation of CEO status to electronically file CDBG application as town manager; seconded by Mr. Gagnon. Motion passed, 5-0.

k. Announcement Re: Accepting Nominations for Meritorious Service Award (due 03/13): Chairman Adams announced that nominations for the Meritorious Public Service Award would be accepted from the Board—and for the first time, from the public—until March 13. Nominations should be submitted in writing.

BOARD LIAISON REPORTS: Mr. Gagnon said there would be upcoming public meetings regarding the changes to the Zoning By-laws, and that the public should attend and give input, as this would be major legislative change for the town.

CITIZENS' INPUT: William Shemeth in his capacity as chairman of the Council on Aging expressed his thanks for the Board's support for a long-range plan. Sharon Wood of 10 Gauthier Road said she had

volunteered to serve on the Lake Street screening committee after listening to the Board's request, and that Board members did not support her not because of an issue of professionalism but because they did not like her.

BOARD MEMBER AND STAFF COMMENTS: Ms. Gaucher said that people do not come forward to serve on committees because of the way they are treated, that the opinions of people with different beliefs are not considered, and that the town of Spencer was guilty of political discrimination. Mr. Cloutier said that Ms. Gaucher was the most unprofessional person he had ever worked with and that differences of opinion are good but need to be presented respectfully. Mr. Gagnon emphasized the importance of meaningful debate. Mr. Herl said he had been happy Ms. Wood submitted a letter until he read it and found it inappropriate; Chairman Adams concurred and added that all politics are biased and discriminating. He then noted he had attended the retirement party for Fred Smock and presented him with a certificate on behalf of the Board and town; noted upcoming events and meetings; and reported that nominations for town offices are due March 13.

At 8:41 p.m., motion by Mr. Gagnon to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Herl. Motion passed, 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Simpson, Administrative Assistant

_____ Chairman

_____ Vice Chairman

_____ Clerk

_____ Member

_____ Member

Board of Selectmen